



FLICC

Federal Library &
Information Center Committee

Fedlink Serials Handbook 2011

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I. FEDLINK Serials Subscription Services

A. Program Summary

LC/FEDLINK Serials Program

FEDLINK is a fee-based federal revolving fund program authorized under the Library of Congress' Fiscal Operations Improvement Act, P.L. 106-481, section 103 (2 U.S.C. section 182c). Fees paid to FEDLINK are determined each year to recover the direct and indirect costs of support for services. The Library of Congress (LC) FEDLINK interagency cooperative procurement program has established contractual vehicles such as Basic Ordering Agreements (BOAs) and Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) Contracts with more than 120 commercial information providers of database retrieval and publications acquisitions services. FEDLINK has maintained BOAs for serials subscription services since 1985.

Serials Services

Serials are items in many formats published serially in the U.S. and abroad, including common magazines, newspapers, and technical or specialty journals. The requirements for subscription services provided by the vendors are described in the agreements in Section C - Statement of Work (SOW) of the Serials contract. Basic serials subscription services provided by the vendors include placing new and renewal orders with publishers, prepaying publishers, claiming missing issues and providing a range of administrative services. Price and publication information and management reports are routinely provided. In addition, some vendors can provide additional serials management and automation services, e.g., checking in and processing issues; providing data exchange with the library's online system; or managing access to electronic journals. Price ranges for optional services are established in the BOAs. Serials prices are established by the publishers; service fees/discounts charged by the vendor are within ranges established in the BOAs. Each customer's total cost is determined by a quote from the vendor on the agency's individual title list and technical requirements.

FEDLINK Serials Basic Ordering Agreements

LC/FEDLINK serials BOAs are established through a competitive procurement which determines the vendors' ability to provide full serials subscription services to federal libraries. FEDLINK has established agreements with multiple serials subscription agents for FY2011 with option years for the life of the BOA. A list of vendors, with addresses, phone numbers, etc., is provided in Section C. The Statement of Work is published as Appendix A of this document.

Because the vendor quotes are obtained and the funds are authorized under the FEDLINK program, the terms and conditions specified in the FEDLINK agreements apply to the resulting contracts for individual agency serials orders. The Statement of Work (SOW) and other terms and conditions in the BOAs provide for best value, full service agreements, and standard federal

acquisitions practices. LC/Office of Contracts and Grants Management (LC/OCGM) signs the delivery orders for Transfer Pay accounts and individual agency procurement officers sign local purchase orders.

Using LC/FEDLINK

FEDLINK's agreements are not schedule contracts. To use them, an agency must establish an Interagency Agreement (IAG) with LC/FEDLINK. Conducting competition for serials subscription services among all the FEDLINK serials vendors has been determined to be in the best interest of the government. A brief overview of the IAG process is in Section IV of this resource.

Note: Establishing an IAG in the Base Year of the Contract:

Those competing FY2011 requirements during the spring and summer of 2010 will not be able to establish a FEDLINK IAG or register for an SZ account during the early competition. Vendor selection is likely to be completed before FY2011 IAG registration begins. If the agency has received their award letter before the FY2011 registration opens, usually in mid-September, the agencies can register directly with the subscription vendor(s) specified in the award letter. If the agency has not received the award letter, the funding for the serials should be assigned to the SZ – Serials Holding Account.

Direct Pay Service

Accounts for serials services may be established either as Direct Pay or Transfer Pay. For Direct Pay accounts, the agency contracting or procurement official is responsible for conducting competition and authorizing the expenditure of funds. Agencies who register for the Direct Pay option must follow the advertisement of procurements and competition requirements of their local procurement office. Once the competition has been completed the agency issues the purchase order to the vendor against the FEDLINK BOA and pays invoices issued by the vendor. For FY2011 the Direct Pay service fee is \$1,200 per account up to \$100,000 plus 0.60% of service dollars over \$100,000. The agency is obligated to LC for the amount of the fees when it signs the IAG.

Customers expecting to secure Direct Pay services should verify that their agency contracting officials can undertake the procurement. To be sure they have sufficient information about the FEDLINK program, please provide them with a copy of this document.

LC/OCGM staff members are available to assist the local contracting officer at (202) 707-0461. LC FEDLINK network librarians are also available to assist with describing technical requirements for Transfer or Direct Pay accounts at (202) 707-4832 or <mailto:lmcd@loc.gov>.

Transfer Pay Service

Accounts for serials services may be established either as Direct Pay or Transfer Pay. The LC/OCGM is the contracting office for all Transfer Pay procurements. Transfer Pay accounts transfer contracting authority to FEDLINK, which performs the competition, issues a delivery order against the BOA, and pays invoices up to the amount authorized by the delivery order. The Transfer Pay service fee for FY2011 is 6.75% up to \$100,000, 6% over \$100,000, and 4% for accounts over \$1,000,000.00 of the dollars transferred to FEDLINK to cover services rendered by the vendor. The agency is obligated to LC for the amount of the fees when it signs the IAG.

For Transfer Pay customers, LC advertises all procurements exceeding \$25,000 on the Federal Business Opportunities Web Site.

Compete Individual Orders: Request Quotes and Compare Responses

All individual orders over \$3,000 will be competed among all serials vendors participating in the FEDLINK program. See Section C in Appendix A below for the list of participating vendors; see Section II below for guidelines on competing serials orders. Federal acquisitions procedures are followed in requesting quotes, evaluating responses and selecting vendor(s). Warranted agency contracting officials sign the contractual documents that authorize the expenditure of funds after the vendor selection is made and funds become available: LC/Office of Contracts and Grants Management (LC/OCGM) signs the delivery orders for Transfer Pay accounts and individual agency procurement officers sign local purchase orders.

B. Exercising Option Years

LC/OCGM reserved the right to exercise option years for those members whose requirements were competed, i.e., those with accounts over the micro-purchase threshold, currently set at \$3,000. Contracting officers for Direct Pay members may also reserve this right when issuing RFQs (contact your agency contracts office for more information). It may have been determined during competition of individual agency requirements or during the period of performance that it would be in the best interest of the government to seek competition again for future fiscal years. Agencies which chose the firm-fixed pricing option for one fiscal year must seek competition for the next fiscal year. LC/OCGM can assist you with questions about exercising option year renewals.

C. Serials Vendors in the FEDLINK Program

Once the Basic Order Agreements are awarded, this section will contain a listing of the vendors who offer serials subscription services via FEDLINK. Company name, the basic ordering agreement contract number, FEDLINK Vendor ID and general contact information will be listed for reference.

D. FEDLINK Points of Contact

Following are important points of contact. The FEDLINK Fiscal Hotline (202) 707-4900 is available from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, for general FEDLINK program information and referrals for further assistance.

For Information on:

FedBizOpps synopsis

Requests for Quote

Basic Ordering Agreements

Fax: 202-707-0485

<mailto:jaik@loc.gov>

Call:

Janice Aiken

Serials Contracting Officer

Phone: 202-707-0461

Registration for FEDLINK Services

IAGs and IAG Amendments

Accounts, invoices, statements

FEDLINK Fiscal Hotline

Phone: 202-707-4900

Fax: 202-707-4999

Subscription service technical requirements

Overview of the serials process

Lynn McDonald

FEDLINK Network Manager

Phone: 202-707-4832

Fax: 202-707-4828

<mailto:lmcd@loc.gov>

Please see FLICC/FEDLINK [Serials Subscription Services](#) for the latest serial subscription services updates.

II. Guidelines for Competing Serials Subscription Services Under the FEDLINK Program

A. Overview

The use of the FEDLINK serials BOAs requires an IAG with FEDLINK for both Transfer and Direct Pay accounts. However, those competing FY2011 requirements during the spring and summer of 2010 will not be able to establish a FEDLINK IAG or register for an SZ account during the early competition. Vendor selection is likely to be completed before FY2011 IAG registration begins. If the agency has received their award letter before the FY2011 registration opens, usually in mid-September, the agencies can register directly with the subscription vendor(s) specified in the award letter. If the agency has not received the award letter by the time the FY2011 FEDLINK registration opens, the funding for the serials should be assigned to the SZ – Generic Serials Account.

The agency must also provide a serials title list and other requirements to the Serials Subscription Agents as a part of the RFQ (Request for Quote) process. A vendor shall be selected only on the criteria stated in the RFQ.

Agencies must determine if their annual subscription procurement is expected to exceed or to be less than the current micro-purchase threshold of \$3,000 and to choose between FEDLINK Transfer Pay or Direct Pay service. These decisions determine whether the agency will conduct competitions locally or through LC/OCGM.

For the FY2011 serials competition, please begin the competition process in early spring and allow as much time as possible for the RFQ routines. Vendors will be responding to hundreds of RFQs, and LC/OCGM will be processing hundreds of Transfer Pay RFQs.

After the original year for competition in FY2011, allow at least three months for competing requirements. In other words, for money to be obligated by September 30, requirements should be at the contracting office no later than late June; earlier is better. Realize, however, that publishers will not have provided new price information to the subscription agents until late summer or fall. Ask the vendor to clarify expected price increase percents, especially for quotes provided before August, and then reconfirm the amount to be obligated as near the issuance of the funding as possible.

B. Steps in the Competition Process

Prepare your Serials Competition Requirements

The basic requirements are:

- Serials Title List
- Serials Checklist of Requirements, including any special requirements
- Intent to Compete Form (Transfer Pay over \$3,000 only)

Step #1 – Serials Title List: (Performed by the librarian or other technical representative; Required for both Direct Pay and Transfer Pay):

- The list of serials titles that an agency expects to order or renew is used as the basis for obtaining quotes. The electronic title list may be generated in-house or may be obtained from the incumbent vendor and edited as necessary. Providing such a list is a requirement of the current FEDLINK BOAs. The incumbent vendor should be able to supply an electronic version of the list upon request to LC/OCGM preferably in MS Excel. Contact FEDLINK Network Operations if you can only supply the list in paper. The list should represent an intended order, however, in most cases, exact titles are confirmed by the library or ordering office once selection is made. Additional titles may be added or canceled throughout the year, except in the case of Firm-Fixed price procurements, which must identify exact requirements.
- Lists should be by ship-to address and then alphabetical order by title. If you currently use the FEDLINK Serials service, obtain and review the list of your current serials titles from your current FEDLINK serials vendor. You may be able to use your current vendor's online system to produce the list. The serials list should include:
 - (1) Complete "Bill to" and "Ship to" address
 - (2) Title
 - (3) ISSN (stored as nnnn-nnnn)
 - (4) Publisher -
 - (5) Quantity
 - (6) Subscription Period based on Agency Data
 - (7) For current online journals, the tier/level of the current subscription, if possible.
 - (8) For titles or journal packages that have prices that you have negotiated directly with the publisher, please include the negotiated price.
 - (8) Frequency
 - (9) Format
 - (10) All additional titles which may not be due for renewal, but which are on record for a specific consignee
- Update the current serials title list to remove any titles no longer required or to add new titles.
- If you have any titles through Elsevier Science Direct, please check [FLICC/Fedlink web site](#) for an announcement regarding ordering Elsevier Science Direct titles through the FEDLINK serials contract.

- If you are not able to obtain a serials list of current subscriptions, you will need to create a spreadsheet with the data fields listed above.
- Direct Pay members also should bring to the attention of their contracting officers the time frames that affect delivery. Vendors must be able to observe the lead-times required by publishers for renewing and beginning subscriptions. January starts should be authorized by the previous November; vendors may not be able to prevent subscription lapses if orders are authorized after Thanksgiving.

Step #2 – Serials Checklist: (Performed by the librarian or other technical representative; required for both Direct Pay and Transfer Pay):

- FEDLINK has created a [Serials Checklist](#) of information that the serials vendors will need in order to respond to the RFQ. Please fill out the Serials Checklist completely.

Step #3 – Intent to Compete Form: (Performed by the librarian or other technical representative; Transfer Pay members only):

- The [Intent to Compete Form](#) provides information to FEDLINK that we will need to perform the competition for Transfer Pay customers.
- Transfer Pay agencies requesting LC/OCGM to perform competition should note the earliest subscription period on the Intent to Compete Serials Subscriptions Form to highlight the time by which subscriptions must be authorized, to help avoid potential breaks in service.

Step #4 – Submit the Required forms to the Appropriate Procurement

Official: (Performed by the librarian or other technical representative; required for both Direct Pay and Transfer Pay):

- **Transfer Pay exceeding \$3,000:** Email the package to LC/OCGM (see contact information in Section D). The package should include: The Serials Title List, Serials Checklist, and the Intent to Compete Form.
- **Direct Pay:** Send the Serials Title List and Serials Checklist, or other equivalent documentation of requirements along with information on FEDLINK procedures and vendor information to the appropriate agency contracting official, as determined by local agency policy. Be sure to document quotes received and other factors affecting the choice of vendors; notify all vendors who provided quotes for vendor selection, and submit documentation to FEDLINK using the Serials Selection Form.

Step #5 – Additional Requirements for procurements exceeding \$25,000

(Performed by the contracting officer):

- For procurements exceeding \$25,000, the contracting officer shall: Synopses agency requirements on the FedBizOpps Web Site. LC/OCGM only synopses Transfer Pay procurements; customer agency contracting personnel shall synopses Direct Pay services in accordance with their local agency requirements. FedBizOpps notices should include the FEDLINK ID, an indication that the order will be placed under the FEDLINK program, and, if applicable, a notice reserving the right to exercise available option years.

Please Note: Quotes provided by the unsuccessful offerors are confidential, as is other proprietary information provided by all vendors responding to the request for quotes. If vendors raise questions during the quotation process or upon notification of selection, immediately seek guidance from LC/OCGM (Transfer Pay) or your contracting officer (Direct Pay).

Step #6 – Release the RFQ (Performed by the contracting officer.):

- Email the request for quote (RFQ) package to all vendors with existing FY2011 FEDLINK BOAs.
- Be sure to include the member library's FEDLINK ID on all RFQs.

Step #7 – Evaluate the Responses to the RFQ (Performed by the contracting officer and the librarian or other technical representative):

- Evaluate responses and forward any technical responses to the requesting agency for review. Vendors shall be selected based on criteria established in the RFQ. If optional services (which may incur charges) are required, these services shall be fully described and cross-referenced to the BOA Contract Line Item Number (CLIN). The assistance of the librarian or other agency technical representative should be made available to the contracting officer, if requested. Questions pertaining to the competition process should be referred to the appropriate contracting officer. Other procurement officials are welcome to confer with LC/ OCGM. FEDLINK librarians can also assist libraries and other technical representatives.
- All subscription agents responding to the FedBizOpps posting would need to have fulfilled all of the requirements necessary to be awarded a FEDLINK Serials BOA

Step #8 – Notification of the Award to the Vendors (Performed by the contracting officer.):

- Notify the selected vendor as well as the unsuccessful vendors who responded to the RFQ. LC/OCGM performs this function only for RFQs issued by their office in accordance with FAR 15.503. Do not skip this essential step. The agency contracts office, in accordance with their policies and procedures, shall accomplish notification of unsuccessful offerors for Direct Pay competition
- Once the vendors have been notified, the individual authorized to place the order, i.e., the librarian, may contact the selected vendor to confirm exact titles and service components. This allows the vendor to place the order in a timely manner once s/he has received the delivery order or Direct Pay authorization.
- Competition for subscriptions that will be funded in FY2011 but begin January 2011 or before will be competed in the spring and summer of 2010. Steps 8 through 10 will take place once FY2011 registration is open, in autumn 2010.

Step #9 – Completion of FEDLINK IAG Requirements (Performed by the librarian or other technical representative)

Once the FY2011 FEDLINK registration is open, All FEDLINK customers using the FEDLINK serials contracts will need to complete the FY2011 IAG process. For assistance with the FY2011 FEDLINK registration, please contact the **FEDLINK Fiscal Hotline at 202-707-4900**.

- **For FEDLINK Transfer Pay customers**, if your serials competition is completed and you have received an award letter you can add the serials funding directly to the serial vendor(s) listed in the award letter.
 - If your serials competition has not been completed, you should add the funding to the FEDLINK SZ – Generic Serials vendor account.
 - Once the competition process is completed, LC/OCGM will notify the (FFO) FEDLINK Fiscal Office to move the serials funding from SZ to the awarded vendor(s). No action is required on the part of the FEDLINK member to move the funds.
- **For Direct Pay customers**, if your competition has been completed, indicate the selected serial vendor(s) during your IAG registration process. Please include your Serials Selection Form and a copy of the Purchase Order as a part of your FEDLINK registration documentation.
 - If your serials competition has not been completed, you should indicate the FEDLINK SZ – Generic Serials vendor account during your registration process.
 - The Serials Selection Form and the purchase order will need to be submitted to FEDLINK once the competition is complete. Once the forms are received by the LC/OCGM, LC/OCGM will notify the (FFO) FEDLINK Fiscal Office to move the serials funding from SZ to the awarded vendor(s). No action is required on the part of the FEDLINK member to move the funds.

- Once the FEDLINK IAG paperwork is completed, LC/OCGM issues documentation to the selected vendor with a “Not to Exceed” or ceiling amount for the procurement:
 - Transfer Pay: LC/OCGM signs the delivery order and forwards it to the vendor. A copy is sent to the customer IAG point of contact.
 - Direct Pay: LC/OCGM sends authorization to the vendor to provide services in accordance with the BOA and purchase order. This authorization tells the vendor that the requesting agency is a customer in good standing and has the appropriate documentation on file at FEDLINK. A copy is sent to the IAG point of contact. Direct Pay: Purchase orders for renewals over \$100,000.00 for the year will be routed through FEDLINK LC/OCGM with the signed IAG. LC will forward them to the vendor with authorization to proceed.
- For more information on the FEDLINK Serials IAG process or FEDLINK online registration, please see Section IV.

C. Determining and Evaluating Requirements: Elements to Consider

#1 – Serials Title List:

- The quote responses should indicate any titles which are not available from the vendor and why. Titles may have ceased publication or the vendor may need more information to verify which title an agency intends to order. In some cases, a particular vendor may not be able to provide some titles because the publisher will only supply the title if the customer orders directly (i.e., not through a subscription agent) or through some vendors and not others.
- It is possible, although unusual, for an agency to determine during the evaluation process that a vendor cannot supply a sufficient portion of the agency’s title list. Contracting officials will contact the customer to determine if the fulfillment rate of the quote is satisfactory.
- Review the pricing to see if electronic journal tiles and packages were quoted at the correct level. Please document any questions.

#2 – Technical Requirements/Special Instructions to the Vendor:

- The SOW (Statement of Work) describes the services required under the FEDLINK BOA (Basic Order Agreement). The BOA provides for three groups of serials services. Lot 1 provides basic order and renewal services. All of the vendors selected for the FEDLINK BOA can provide all of the Lot 1 services described in the SOW. Technical requirements competed under RFQs shall not be outside those services described in the SOW.
- **Lot 1 - Basic Order and Renewal Services** The standard terms of the SOW thoroughly provides for full service subscription services which will meet the needs of many of our FEDLINK members. Evaluation of the Lot 1 RFQ responses is based on the determination that titles can be provided and the lowest fee. For FEDLINK members selecting only Lot 1 (Basic Serials Services) will provide for the fastest process.

- **Lot 2 and Lot 3 – Services** The services provided in Lot 2 and Lot 3 go beyond the requirements for Basic Order and Renewal Services. Lot 2 services include alternative pricing options, journal check-in services, and interface options with the members ILS (Integrated Library System). Lot 3 services include user interfaces to electronic publications and management of electronic publications subscriptions. Some Lot 2 and Lot 3 services may have additional fees attached to the service. The evaluations of FEDLINK Members requesting Lot 2 and/or Lot 3 services will need to take into account any additional fees included in the RFQ response and the possible price increases for those services for the Option Years of the contract.
- **Special Instructions** The agency technical representative may determine a need to provide special instructions to the vendor in the RFQ. Special instructions identify any particular local requirements, which the agency should verify the vendor will perform for the service fee quoted, or to clarify if they are in fact optional services for a separate charge. For example, an agency may have a large number of ship-to addresses that change frequently, or special data elements required on invoices or reports. Frequent use of special delivery methods may be noted, e.g. rush shipment or courier service for newspapers. Agency staff may have established routines, which depend upon communication of data such as claims, invoice copies or reports via interfaces between a vendor and the agency local systems. Most management reports are routinely provided by the vendor on request or at a frequency stated by the customer, but if a library depends upon particular reports with special data elements, sorting arrangements or formats (especially electronic), describe the technical requirements in the RFQ. Do not describe requirements that will not actually be used, and do not exceed your actual minimum requirements. US law requires fair and open competition.

#3 – Pricing Terms:

- **Standard terms:** Most agencies use the standard pricing terms of the FEDLINK BOAs, which state that individual titles are charged at the publisher's list price plus a service fee or discount. The BOAs state a possible range for service fees. For individual orders competed under an RFQ, a firm-fixed fee/discount percentage is determined in the competition process. Cost quoted in the RFQ include publisher's list price, an estimate for bill-laters, an estimate for supplemental charges, charges for optional services requested, and firm-fixed fee/discount percentage. Cost evaluation is based on the offered firm-fixed service fee/discount percent and any charges for optional services. The total price of the title list is provided for budgeting purposes, not for evaluation of costs
- **Firm-fixed price:** Firm-fixed price means a firm line-by-line pricing for title list and optional requirements. No additions or deletions to the title list will be allowed. No modifications will be accepted to add or delete funds. This option is not renewable and must be re-competed each fiscal year.

D. Authorization to Prepay for Subscriptions

Funds obligation is based on the fiscal year in which the order is placed. Orders may be placed against current fiscal year funds for subscriptions to begin during the next fiscal year; for example, orders placed in FY2010 prior to September 30, 2010, can begin subscriptions in January 2011 and will be paid for with FY2010 funds. This practice is recommended to avoid the possibility of subscription lapses at the beginning of the calendar year caused by late authorization of funds at the beginning of the federal fiscal year.

- 31 USC §3324(d)(2), “The head of an agency may pay in advance from appropriations available for the purpose – charges for a publication printed or recorded in any way for the auditory or visual use of the agency.”
- Electronic publications, e.g. CD-ROM and a database, are held in B-256692 (1995) to “constitute publications for purposes of section 3324(d) as well.” However, equipment to use publications and associated services such as telephone support have been held not to be covered by authorization to prepay for publications, e.g. B-256692 (1995) and B-188166 (1977).
- Subscriptions may cross fiscal years and may be for more than one year, as explained in Comp.Gen. 326 (1943): “The accounting officers consistently have held that the cost of publications for one year or less may be charged to the appropriation current when the subscription was ordered, notwithstanding that it may cover deliveries extending into the subsequent year. ... [Current laws] do not specifically limit advance payment for subscriptions to a one-year period, and, therefore, where it is advantageous for the purpose of economy or otherwise to subscribe ... for longer periods, payment therefore may be made from current appropriations otherwise available for such purpose.” This is codified in 41 CFR §101-25.108: “Subscriptions ... for which it is known in advance that a continuing requirement exists should be for multiple years rather than for a single year where such method is advantageous for the purpose of economy or otherwise. Where various bureaus or offices in the same agency are subscribing to the same publication, consideration shall be given to consolidating these requirements to the extent practical on an agency-wide basis and on a multiyear basis. Payment covering issues to be delivered during the entire subscription period may be made in advance from currently available appropriations.”

E. FEDLINK Registration in Option Years of the Serials BOAs

For FEDLINK Transfer Pay customers and Direct Pay customers, you can register with the serials vendor awarded during your competition for the subsequent options of the contract if:

- The requirements specified in your competition have not changed significantly. If the value of your serials list has decreased or increased (beyond normal inflation factors), please contact FEDLINK to determine if your serials need to be re-competed.
- You are content with your current vendor. If you are having unresolved issues with the serials vendor awarded during your competition, you can re-compete and request to take past performance of your current vendor into account in the review process. There are specific requirements for this type of competition. Please contact FEDLINK as soon as you start having problems with your vendor.

For Direct Pay customers, Please include a copy of the Purchase Order as a part of your FEDLINK registration documentation.

PLEASE NOTE: If you do not submit your FEDLINK IAG for the options years of the contract, you are no longer covered by the competed FEDLINK contract terms.

- If you have any questions about the FEDLINK IAG process, please contact the FEDLINK Fiscal Hotline at 202-707-4900.

III. Contract Administration

FEDLINK members are responsible for monitoring vendor performance and verifying that invoices are correct. To ensure both a smooth transition to a new vendor and efficiency with your orders, the following guidelines will assist you in managing your serials contracts.

A. Start Up Communication with the Vendor

- Contact the vendor. They may call you first, but you are also free to contact them once the contracting official has sent the official notice. Be sure to give them your FEDLINK ID.
- Confirm the renewal list. You probably do not want them to place orders using the list that they received initially, for the RFQ. Usually libraries need to substitute titles for those that have ceased publication; sometimes your funding level needs adjustment or titles need to be cut due to price increases. The vendor should provide you with a list to work with, although in order to expedite the process, you may have a new version of the list you want to send them immediately. Make sure you receive some kind of confirmation as to what they are ordering before they proceed, however. Miscommunication with a new vendor at this stage creates problems you want to avoid. You may need to clarify which title you are ordering among several with similar names, for example.
- Vendors can not place any orders until the delivery order or purchase order is received from the appropriate contracting official.
- Confirm any processes that relate to day to day communications, such as your library's points of contact and the vendor's service representative assigned to your account, orders, rushes, claims forms and/or reports, price increases in excess of authorized funding levels, and any other routine services you may need early in the season. You will soon need to confirm any routine reports you will need through the year; confirm schedules for second/third claims and renewals; learn how to use the vendor's online catalog and other systems; confirm how you and the vendor will communicate regarding bill-later items (to ensure funding levels are adequate); and be sure you understand how you and the vendor will communicate regarding new titles, added copies, cancellations, sample titles, memberships, duplicate issues, and any special reports. You may need to request a complimentary copy of invoices (supplementing the copy sent to your payment center, e.g. FEDLINK Fiscal.)

- Any Optional Services (Lot 2, Lot 3 or Special Instructions) will need to be confirmed with your vendor.
- Your subscription agent may have written information or online training about their services and procedures. Please take advantage of these resources.
- Vendors are required to provide you with a copy of the BOA with FEDLINK, on request. Section C, the Statement of Work (SOW), is included here in Appendix A. Make sure staff who work with serials are familiar with the SOW and have a reference copy.
- Background: Vendors prepay the publishers on behalf of FEDLINK customers and then invoice the government. On the invoices, vendors' prices for journals are the publisher's price on the date of the order to the publisher, plus the firm-fixed fee/discount determined under competition. Optional services are billed according to the terms of the BOAs, stated against Contract Line Item Numbers (CLINs), with no additional service fee assessed by the vendor.
- The publisher determines serials prices. Some publishers provide discounts to certain groups so that government or institutional prices may be available. Serials vendors will assist in determining the lowest price available from the publisher for individual customers. The publisher's list prices are themselves made publicly available. Calling the publisher or looking at an online database often provides the most reliable data such as the vendor's databases of titles, which customers can access, and the publisher's list price.
- Billing: When the order is placed and the subscription paid by the vendor, the correct list price on that day will be determined by the vendor so that billing will be accurate. FEDLINK encourages members to spot check invoices for accuracy, including checking some individual title prices to verify that the list price was charged. Remember, however, that the price on the day the consulted catalog was printed or the price on the day the publisher was called by the federal customer may not be identical to the price on the day the order was placed. Apparent discrepancies should be investigated carefully. Vendors will supply copies of payment information on request and otherwise assist in efforts to verify correct prices, as will many publishers.
- Funding: Once service begins, vendors will continue to work with the customer to ensure supplemental charges are forecast as accurately as possible. For Transfer Pay, funds can remain in the FEDLINK serials account for up to three years beyond the base year, to allow for bill-later charges and costs for supplemental charges on multiple-year subscriptions. Within the original fiscal year, funds can be moved from the serials account to another account or a refund can be requested and the funds used outside the FEDLINK program. If necessary, funds can be added or moved to another account to cover supplemental charges. Most agencies have found these pricing practices satisfactory, due to the assistance provided by the vendors and FEDLINK.

B. Ongoing Contract Administration

- You are responsible for verifying that invoices are correct. Transfer Pay customers may use the Error Report form to report a vendor error, or an error made by FEDLINK. Direct Pay customers should follow agency procedures. Report errors as soon as possible so that credits or adjustments can be made in a timely manner. Spot check that the publisher's price was billed correctly on the invoice, for some of the titles. (You may need to contact the publisher to do this, and be sure that you are checking what the price was when your vendor placed the order, since prices change over time.)
- Be sure you know how you and the vendor will communicate regarding price increases and funding authorization levels. Not all subscription agents communicate in precisely the same way concerning price increases, although the new FEDLINK agreement has some more specific language in C.4.1.9.4. Publishers sometimes raise prices or charge for supplemental volumes; continuations and bill-later publications need to be funded adequately. Exchange rates can affect funding levels during the year. Your subscription agent prepays for you, but you have a responsibility to see that they will be paid in a timely fashion. FEDLINK must reject invoices for Transfer Pay accounts if they exceed authorized funding levels, and Direct Pay accounts are often handled similarly. Be sure you are familiar with the procedures for adding funds, and know how to communicate with your vendor if you find you cannot fund all additional charges through the year. Firm fixed pricing is an option, but requires re-competing each year and, it is believed, costs the government more than the standard pricing option.
- Report problems in a timely fashion.
 - Be sure you know how to contact your service representative, how to contact their back-up, and to whom at the company to report unresolved or ongoing problems. The vendor contact for the FEDLINK agreement is available on the [FEDLINK Contracting/Vendor Products and Services page](#).
 - Report ongoing problems to FEDLINK and LC/OCGM in a timely fashion. Contact Jim Oliver, FEDLINK Vendor Services Representative, at 202-707-4960 or <mailto:joli@loc.gov>; confer about problems with Lynn McDonald, FEDLINK Network Manager, at 202-707-4832 or <mailto:lmcd@loc.gov>; or with Janice Aiken, Serials contract specialist, at 202-707-0462 or <mailto:jaik@loc.gov>.
 - Document ongoing problems. LC/OCGM will help bring the vendor's attention to unresolved problems, if necessary. However, if you reach that point, you will also want to have begun a file documenting your problems and communications attempting to resolve them. LC/OCGM will want copies of such documentation for future reference, and you may need them to help document evaluations of past performance in future competitions.
 - [Vendor Evaluation Forms](#) [are requested from all customers' accounts over \$25,000.00 and will be sent to the IAG point of contact early in the next fiscal year. However, all customers can complete them.

IV. FEDLINK Serials IAG Process At-a-Glance

A. Online Registration (For Questions, please call the FEDLINK Fiscal Hotline at 202-707-4900.)

Complete and submit the [FEDLINK Online Registration Form](#)

- If the competition is not completed: register for a Generic Serials (SZ) account: On the registration form indicating the following:
 - Service ID: SZ
 - Service Name: Generic Serials
 - Action: B (for begin)
 - Complete Service Dollars and Fund Type on the registration form.
- If competition is completed: register for the selected vendor. Direct Pay customers must submit required documentation about the procurement (e.g., Serials Selection Form, purchase orders, etc.) as explained in the Direct Pay Services section of this document.
- FEDLINK will process the online registration form within 72 hours. An email notification is sent to the member when the process is completed. The member must download the IAG form to obtain agency's authorized signatures.
- FEDLINK strongly recommends that agencies do not wait for competition to be completed before beginning the IAG process. It increases the time before the vendor receives notification that funds are available and service is authorized to proceed. Instead, register as soon as possible for an SZ account.

B. Return Signed IAG

- Secure the IAG signature and fund citation from the funds certification officer and return the signed IAG to FEDLINK Fiscal Operations.
- If you have the serials funding in an SZ account, FEDLINK will amend your IAG to move the funds to the selected vendor once your competition is completed.

V. Glossary of Terms:

"Agency" means any federal library, information center or U.S. Government entity that qualifies for service with FEDLINK.

"Back Orders" are orders that could not be filled by the supplier when originally placed, but is kept on file pending availability of the material.

"Bill Laters" are a type of continuation in which a vendor does not bill a library customer until the publisher has confirmed the price and/or availability of the item or items.

"Basic Order Agreement (BOA)" is an agreement between the government and a company that defines terms and conditions for doing business, but does not obligate funds and therefore is not a contract. The government establishes a contract when a purchase order or Delivery Order is placed against the BOA.

"Customer" means a member who has or is requesting a current contract with the Vendor to provide serials subscription services.

"Delivery Order" Contract supplied by FEDLINK to indicate the availability of funds to a FEDLINK vendor

"Direct Pay" For Direct Pay accounts, the agency issues the purchase order to the vendor against the FEDLINK BOA and pays invoices issued by the vendor. The agency contracting or procurement official is responsible for conducting competition and authorizing the expenditure of funds. Agencies who register for the Direct Pay option must follow the competition requirements of their local procurement office.

"FFO" FEDLINK Fiscal Office and FEDLINK Fiscal Hotline – 202-707-4900

"IAG" – InterAgency Agreement; Required agreement between LC/FEDLINK and the Member Agency for both Transfer Pay and Direct Pay options

"LC/OCGM" Library of Congress/Office of Contracts and Grants Management

"Licensing" refers to terms and conditions required by the owners of proprietary systems, software or intellectual property regarding the terms of its use.

"Member" means an agency with a current interagency agreement with the Library, to use the LC/FEDLINK contracts and other services.

"Publisher Price" the established publisher list price for the given subscription period at the time of order and acceptance by the publisher. The price at which a publication is made available to the public. It is established by the publisher and is exclusive of any discount. Loosely, the price quoted in the publisher's catalog. [ALA *Glossary*, Modified] Also known as Retail Price.

"Serial" as used in the field of library science and in this solicitation, means any publication issued in successive parts, usually (though not always) at regular intervals, and intended to be continued indefinitely. Serials include: periodicals, newspapers, magazines, annuals, yearbooks, journals, memoirs, proceedings, transactions, and numbered monographic series and other serially published works. Serials may be published in any medium or format (including electronic, print, microform, or other non-print media), and may be available through purchase (as with traditional print magazines) or license (as with online journals).

"Subscription" means serial or periodical publication and related services. It also shall designate back issues of serials or periodical publications, but such issues shall be dated no earlier than one year before the current volume. The agency determines the subscription period, publisher permitting, and the Vendor must place and service it for the life of the subscription plus three months.

"Statement of Work" detailed description of the specific services or tasks a contractor is required to perform under a contract.

"Transfer Pay" Transfer Pay accounts transfer contracting authority to FEDLINK, which issues a delivery order against the BOA and pays invoices up to the amount authorized by the delivery order. LC/OCGM is the contracting office for all Transfer Pay procurements

"Vendor" or "contractor" means the organization providing serial subscription services to agencies, also known as a "serials subscription agent," "subscription agent," "serials agent," "intermediary," or "aggregator. "

Definitions of additional terminology that relates to serials acquisition may be found in the [*Serials Acquisitions Glossary*](#) of the American Library Association.

Appendix A: Section C – Statement of Work

- C.1.1. The FEDLINK PROGRAM.** The Federal Library and Information Network (FEDLINK) is a nationwide interagency consortium sponsored by the Library of Congress (LC or the Library) through its Federal Library and Information Center Committee (FLICC). FEDLINK offers federal libraries, information centers and other federal offices information retrieval and library support services to help them fulfill their crucial mission of keeping the Government and the nation informed. FEDLINK contracting for library services began in 1974 with a delegation of procurement authority (DPA) from the General Services Administration to LC. Both the Office of Management and Budget and the General Accounting Office encouraged the program's development and use by federal agencies. In many ways, FEDLINK's simplified contracting procedures and voluntary cooperative approach anticipated the federal procurement reforms of the 1990s. Although a DPA is no longer necessary for the program, the FEDLINK approach retains the benefits that come from centralization and experience.
- C.1.2. Statutory Authority for the Program.** As a federal revolving fund program authorized under the Library of Congress' Fiscal Operations Improvement Act, P.L. 106-481, section 103 (2 U.S.C. section 182c), the LC/FEDLINK program takes advantage of the Library of Congress' extensive knowledge of the information industry and library operations to establish contractual agreements for commercial library/information products and services and then makes these contracts available to other federal offices.
- C.1.3. Eligibility to Use LC/FEDLINK BOAs/Contracts.** LC/FEDLINK BOAs/Contracts are available to federal offices in the executive branch (including the armed forces), the legislative branch, the judicial branch, and to independent agencies. In addition, contractors to government agencies who are authorized by the terms of their agency contracts to use federal sources of supply are able to purchase through FEDLINK. Although LC/FEDLINK contracts meet the standards demanded by librarians and other information professionals, LC/FEDLINK users are not limited to libraries. Legal offices, laboratories and information centers, analyst, scientist and other end-users in federal agencies may acquire their electronic and print publications through FEDLINK. The federal agencies that are users of the LC/FEDLINK contracts are known as "members" of the FEDLINK cooperative.

C.1.4. FEDLINK Contracts. In FY09 federal offices bought more than \$120 million in commercial off-the-shelf information services through FEDLINK. This includes the over 200 federal offices that allocated nearly \$24 million to the FEDLINK serials program. LC/FEDLINK contractual agreements are established through formal procurement processes that meet the requirements of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). The program's broad range of contracts includes: access to electronic databases and other publications; document delivery; subscription services for periodicals, newspapers, and other serials; acquisition of print materials from book wholesalers and publishers; and membership in bibliographic utilities (for cataloging, resource sharing, interlibrary loan, and reference services). FEDLINK thus offers its 1,000 participating member organizations "one stop shopping" for their information and library support requirements. By using the FEDLINK program, agencies with little experience with the information industry can take advantage of LC's expertise and save considerable time and expense in purchasing print and electronic publications and library services.

C.1.5. FEDLINK Services. FEDLINK also provides fiscal support to members of the cooperative. When establishing an interagency agreement (IAG) with LC to use FEDLINK services, the member agency may choose to transfer funds to LC to pay invoices for services ordered through the IAG. Under this "transfer pay" option, the contractor sends invoices to FEDLINK, where FEDLINK Fiscal Operations (FFO) staff examines them, pay the contractor electronically, and send the member a statement of account with copies of the paid contractor invoices. With transfer pay, the contractor only has to deal with one financial office and the member is relieved of the invoice processing workload. Alternately, members may choose a direct invoice/payment relationship with contractors. Terms for the transfer pay or direct pay options, information on delivery order/contracts and invoice procedures are described in Section G of this document.

C.1.6. Qualifying Contractors. Contractors who qualify for the FEDLINK program will be those who demonstrate a thorough understanding of the technical requirements of the serial subscription services described herein; who have the required experience and facilities to provide efficient, quality services, whose past performance demonstrates reliability, business stability, and professionalism; and whose prices represent cost savings for the Government and the FEDLINK membership.

C.1.7. Instructions for Proposals. Instructions detailing the format for the proposal are given in **Section L**. The contractor shall demonstrate an understanding of the technical requirements of the three lots and the capability to effectively provide the services. Contractors may supply sample materials (catalogs, management reports, invoices, etc.) to illustrate the narrative description of their services required by Section L, but shall not submit such materials in lieu of narrative description. All invoice information, prices, and payments shall be in US dollars. A list of definitions is included in C.6.2.

C.2 SCOPE OF WORK This solicitation is for the acquisition of serial subscription services for FEDLINK member agencies. Under these Agreements, the government is not obligated to order, nor the Vendor to furnish, any products and services. However, issuance and acceptance of an order does constitute a binding agreement between the parties, subject to the terms of the order and the BOA.

Approximately 85% of subscriptions placed by the Customers will be renewal subscriptions. The Vendor shall furnish all qualified personnel, facilities, and supplies for the placement of new and renewal subscriptions to single or multiple addresses for domestic and foreign serials and periodicals published in paper and other formats, and for related services. Products and services purchased under this solicitation shall only be for official Government use.

C.3 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS This solicitation is for a Basic Ordering Agreement (BOA). The Library anticipates issuing multiple BOAs. A BOA will allow for the issuance of delivery orders for subscriptions in all media, and related services and supplies.

C.3.1. Serial Subscription Services. The solicitation is divided into three lots. Vendors must qualify under Lot 1 in order to provide services under Lot 2 and/or Lot 3. The three lots are:

Lot 1 - Basic Subscription Service.

Lot 2 - Optional Support Services.

Lot 3 - Optional Specialized Electronic Access Services.

C.3.1.1. Lot 1 - Basic Subscription Service. Vendors shall provide basic subscription services that would include all of the tasks necessary to execute and manage orders for new and renewal subscriptions to serial publications, both print and electronic. These tasks fall into the following four critical areas, described in detail in Section C.4.1:

- (1) Ordering and renewing subscriptions;
- (2) Serving as the member's fiscal agent with publishers, including making timely prepayments, processing refunds, supplemental and bill-later charges;
- (3) Facilitating timely access to, and claiming delivery of ordered subscriptions, both print and electronic; and,
- (4) Providing reports and other administrative support for serials management.

C.3.1.2. Lot 2 - Optional Support Services. Vendors may provide optional support to cover a range of serials subscription-related products and services to the libraries, in addition to basic subscription order and renewal services described under Lot 1. (See C.4.2)

C.3.1.3. Lot 3 - Optional Specialized Electronic Access Services. Vendors who offer access to electronic publications (ejournals) may offer related systems for managing access to electronic subscriptions and articles via the Web. Vendors may also provide such electronic services as links resolution and management, access to and management of information about customers' licenses, special customized collection reports, etc. (Subscriptions to journals in electronic and all other formats are a basic subscription service required by Lot 1). Because electronic publication of serials and access to them are in various stages of development within the industry, Vendors are not required to provide these services in order to qualify under the basic FEDLINK BOA. However, if a member library requires one or more of the electronic access services, a Vendor that does not provide those services will not qualify for that particular Customer's procurement. (See C.4.3)

C.4. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

C.4.1.LOT ONE - BASIC SUBSCRIPTION ORDER AND RENEWAL SERVICES.

Vendors must provide subscription services for all subscriptions in all media generally available via agents from foreign and domestic publishers, if the ordering customer can supply sufficient publication information. Ongoing subscription services shall include the following:

- (a) New Subscriptions for both print and electronic.
- (b) Renewals for both print and electronic
- (c) Late Renewals for both print and electronic.
- (d) Back Issues.
- (e) Transfer Renewals.
- (f) Added Copy Subscriptions.
- (g) Special Orders.
- (h) Memberships.
- (I) Claiming.

C.4.1.1. Best Price Available to the Government. Government Customers may be eligible for certain discounts offered by the publishers to that type of customer. If so, the Customer must be charged the lowest of the available prices. The service fee or discount offered by the Vendor shall be applied to this actual publisher subscription price paid by the Customer. The service charge shall be applied to debit invoices only. No administrative charges are to be applied to credit invoices.

C.4.1.2. Subscription Periods.

C.4.1.2.1. Establish Subscription Period. The Vendor is required to place subscriptions at any time during the year unless prohibited by the publisher. If Customers requests a common expiration date, the Vendor will assist in prorating the price if allowed by the Publisher.

C.4.1.2.2. Multi-Year Subscriptions. The Vendor must be able to provide one-, two-, or three-year subscriptions to take advantage of reduced multi-year rates (when available), as well as to offer staggered ordering of multi-year subscriptions.

C.4.1.2.3. Servicing the Subscription. The Vendor shall provide administrative services for each subscription until three months after its expiration, i.e. the publication of the last issue covered by that subscription period.

C.4.1.3. Order Placement. The Vendor shall enter all new and renewal orders within five working days after receipt of Delivery/Purchase Order or receipt of the reviewed title list, whichever is later. Delays are allowed only by prior written agreement. If Vendors have agreements with Publishers that establish terms for batching orders and/or payments, then the orders must be entered and confirmed within the original five-day period, but can be released in accordance with the publisher agreements. A list of such Vendor/publisher agreements must be submitted with the proposal to FEDLINK. This list will remain confidential. LC/FEDLINK reserves the right to request proof of newly negotiated agreements during the term of this BOA.

C.4.1.3.1. Initial Title List Order Placement. Once the Vendor is selected in the pre-order competition, the Vendor will provide the Customer with a newly formatted subscription list.

- a) Orders should not be placed based on the Title list provided for Request for Quote (RFQ) unless the Customer specifically instructs the Vendor in writing to do so.
- b) The Vendor shall organize the list into the format of an Annual Renewal List, in (C.4.1.9.).
- c) The Customer has the right to make a limited number of changes to the list prior to order placement. If the Vendor places orders based on the pre-order price quotation list without a Customer waiver, the Customer may cancel any titles they don't want and will not be responsible for charges the publisher will not refund to the Vendor.
- d) The Vendor shall provide the renewal list to the Customer within twenty calendar days of receipt of authorization to order in the initial year.
- e) The Customer will review the renewal list, make necessary changes, and return it to the Vendor. The Vendor shall reformat the renewal list, incorporating all changes, additions, and deletions, into a final confirmation list, and submit the confirmation list to the Customer for its final approval.
- f) The Customer will review the confirmation list for accuracy, make any editing or other changes, and forward the confirmation list to the Vendor as the final title list. The Customer may elect to waive the final confirmation list review, i.e. the second review.

C.4.1.3.2. Renewal Orders in Option Years

- a) Unless otherwise agreed to in writing between the Vendor and Customer, within 120 days prior to subscription expirations or a mutually agreed upon date, the Vendor will provide a complete list of previously ordered subscriptions as indicated in Section C.4.1.9. - Annual Renewal List, including any additional parts or titles that are now a part of the original ordered subscription including new additions to publisher package subscriptions.
- b) The Customer will make changes to the list and will return it to the Vendor for renewal/order. Changes made by the Customer may include substitutions for ceased, delayed, canceled titles, or for titles that have been changed by the publisher in a significant way. For example, if a title has merged with a new title so that the content of the new journal is no longer relevant to the Customer, substitution(s) can be made to provide the Customer with the desired content.
- c) Upon receipt of authorization to proceed from a contracting officer, as described in G.3.3. and G.4.3, and receipt of the corrected annual renewal listing, the Vendor will place the orders/renewals as described in C.4.1.3. If the Customer does not return the list to the Vendor, subscriptions on the list will not be renewed. The preferred method of transmittal of this list between the parties is through electronic means.

C.4.1.3.3. Rush Orders. Upon receipt of a Customer's telephone call, email or fax requesting a rush order, the Vendor shall transmit the order to the publisher within 24 hours. When the publisher will not accept the order without prior payment, the Vendor shall send out such payment within that same 24-hour period.

C.4.1.3.4. Costs In Excess of Authorized Funding Level. If the cost of the renewal list titles exceeds the authorized funding level, the Vendor must notify the Customer within three working days of discovery and provide information on all price and availability changes. The Customer will direct the Vendor to either;

- a) Stop the order process until the Customer provides modified instructions for all titles not yet ordered, or
- b) Continue placing orders for all titles except those found to exceed the most recently quoted price.

After receiving instructions from the Customer, the Vendor has five working days to place the modified orders. Clarification of the Customer's preferences concerning this process should be determined before any orders are placed.

C.4.1.3.5. Changes from Direct Customer Order to Vendor Order. For basic renewal of direct orders originally placed by the Customer and transferred to the Vendor for renewal, the Vendor shall notify the publisher in writing of the change of billing status.

C.4.1.4. Subscription Ordering Support Services. In support of basic subscription order and renewal services, the Vendor shall perform the following services and provide products as described below.

C.4.1.4.1. Electronic Vendor System. The Vendor shall provide an electronic system to provide information regarding new and renewal subscriptions information (Internet, client, FTP, etc.), that, at a minimum, includes the following features:

- (a) Ability to search by:
 - Title or series
 - ISSN
 - Account number or FEDLINK ID
 - Vendor reference number
- (b) Display features:
 - Bibliographic/order information for each serial title including title, publisher, ISSN, frequency,
 - Pricing options
 - Invoice payment information for, at a minimum, the current and previous year
 - List of outstanding claims (by title) including current status and number of times claimed

The Vendor shall provide the ability to search the Vendor's database to determine availability and cost prior to placement of an order and provide database system training and/or documentation at no cost to the library.

- (c) Ability to indicate the need to place a new order, but allowing the Vendor to make sure the order does not exceed the Customers available funding.

C.4.1.4.2. Unavailable Titles. If publications are only available through a direct order arrangement, or are discontinued, suspended, are otherwise unavailable or have had a title change, the Vendor shall notify the Customer by the time of invoicing.

C.4.1.4.3. Continuations or "Bill Later" Items. Initial pre-order price quotes will contain estimates of costs for "bill later" items. In subsequent years, estimates of such continuations will be included on renewal lists to ensure funding availability is maintained. The Vendor shall supply, upon request and at no charge, a listing by title showing "bill later" titles billed versus those not yet billed.

C.4.1.4.4. Membership Entitlements. The Vendor shall provide a written summary of all publications and/or material received through memberships, i.e., title, frequency, quantity of each publication, and special membership benefits.

C.4.1.4.5. Payment to Publishers. The Vendor must have the financial capability to prepay publishers for serials subscriptions. This will be reviewed during the proposal process and may be reviewed during the life of the BOA. Failure to maintain adequate financial responsibility may disqualify the Vendor for placement of orders under this BOA.

C.4.1.4.6. Advance Payment. The Vendor shall pay all regular subscription orders in advance, prior to submission of the first customer invoice. The Vendor must certify pre-payment to the publisher on all invoices. Upon request, the Vendor shall provide to the customer agency and/or FEDLINK proof of payment of any order invoiced. Requests for exceptions due to prior arrangements with publishers must be submitted to LC/OCGM in advance. LC retains the right to require detailed information about the content of such arrangements subject to confidentiality.

C.4.1.4.7. Adjustments. The Vendor shall make additional payments as necessary and be required to adjust for unforeseen contingencies, such as currency fluctuations, additional volumes, etc., as specified in G.3.7. (d) Refunds, Credits or Other Adjustments.

C.4.1.4.8. Government Audit of Vendor Records. The Vendor shall maintain complete records of all bibliographic and financial transactions of each Customer for up to three years. The Vendor shall provide, to the Customer and LC, immediate access to these records on demand. LC reserves the right to audit the transaction records.

C.4.1.4.9. Account Management. The Vendor shall provide support to the customer agency in tracking funds obligated against the authorized funding level. The Vendor shall provide best estimates of possible outstanding supplemental and bill-later charges, to ensure funding authorization levels will not be exceeded. The agency may request a report of estimated outstanding charges prior to the end of the fiscal year. The agency may instruct the Vendor to cancel outstanding orders, publisher permitting, to clear obligations against prior fiscal years, or to clear funds for re-obligation within the current fiscal year. The Vendor shall be responsible for ensuring that all orders are completed and invoices issued within three years of the fiscal year in which the order or renewal is placed. The Vendor shall cooperate with FEDLINK for customers using either Transfer Pay or Direct Pay account options. The Vendor shall report foreign and domestic pricing trends at least annually. The Vendor shall, at the customer agency's request, provide renewal lists that indicate expected inflation and price increase estimates for the agency's renewal list.

C.4.1.4.10. Ongoing Subscription Services. In addition to renewal listings, subscription services encompass items ordered throughout the year. Such subscription order requests shall be submitted by agency authorized persons and forwarded to the Vendor for placement with the publisher for the subscription period indicated, subject to the terms of this BOA and individual customer fees and terms as established in the RFQ process. Reports of confirmed orders will contain the same information as the renewal lists, plus IAG number, Delivery Order number, MIPR, or Purchase order number.

C.4.1.4.11. Not Included in the Basic Subscription Price. The Vendor shall be responsible for facilitating delivery of all material published within a given subscription year. The Vendor shall notify each Customer of special issues, indexes, and unnumbered supplements not included in the basic subscription price. These items shall be made available to the Customers by special order under this Agreement at the publisher's price and firm fixed service fee percent, with no additional charges, other than any handling and transportation costs charged to the Vendor by the publisher.

C.4.1.4.12. No Charge Materials. Title pages, table of contents, annual or other indexes, and other materials normally supplied by the publisher at no added charge to a requesting subscriber, are to be supplied automatically by the Vendor at no additional charge.

C.4.1.4.13. Sample Copies. The Vendor shall request sample copies of a serial when requested to do so by the Agency.

C.4.1.4.14. Back Issues. Upon request from the agency, the Vendor shall acquire back issues of a title for up to one year prior to the date of the current volume, if the title exists.

C.4.1.4.15. Catalog. Vendor shall provide an annual catalog of titles available. The catalog may be available to the customer electronically -and/or in print format, e.g. via Internet, at no additional charge to the agency. The Customer retains the right to request print copies of catalog information for cataloged titles of particular interest. The catalogs shall have as a minimum the following information:

- (a) Titles
- (b) ISSN
- (c) Cost
- (d) Frequency
- (e) Enumeration
- (f) Title changes, with cross references
- (g) Documented constraints

C.4.1.4.16. Publishers' Prices. The Vendor shall supply on demand publishers invoices or other documentation acceptable to the Customer to verify subscription costs charged the government. The Vendor shall automatically notify Customers of any serial title increase of 25% or more.

C.4.1.5. Administrative Services. The Vendor shall provide the following administrative services to support subscription ordering services:

C.4.1.5.1. Personal Representative. The Vendor shall assign a representative by name who is familiar with the terms of this BOA and the needs of federal libraries and information centers to provide personalized in-house assistance (via toll free or local telephone number and email) for each account and who can provide support in account transition from the incumbent and account claims resolution. The representative shall respond to all inquiries within one business day.

C.4.1.6. Claims for Missing, Defective or Mutilated Issues. The Vendor shall act as the contact point for the agency in obtaining from the publisher replacement copies of periodicals found to be defective, mutilated, lost in transit, or otherwise missing, provided the loss is reported within sixty calendar days. The Vendor shall handle claims for any subscription for up to three months after the termination date of the subscription.

C.4.1.6.1. Electronic Claims. The Vendor shall offer electronic claims services. The agency retains the right to choose whether to use electronic claims and reports, or to communicate via optional print-based means offered by the Vendor, or a combination, e.g. transmitting claims to the Vendor electronically with periodic print reports for confirmation. Documentation on claims procedures/instructions shall be provided, e.g. manuals, reference guides, web documents, etc.

C.4.1.6.2. Time frame. The Vendor shall place all claims with the publisher within a minimum of five working days after receipt. In addition, the Vendor shall accept rush claims electronically, by telephone and fax and process them in fewer than five working days.

C.4.1.6.3. Claim Information. Claims types shall include missing issues, damaged issues, gaps in receipt of a title, non-start of a new order or renewal, error in consignee address, and duplicate issues received. The claim notice sent from the Vendor to the publisher shall include the following information:

- (1) Title being claimed
- (2) Specific issues
- (3) Date of Vendor's order to publisher
- (4) Order period
- (5) Amount paid
- (6) Proof of payment (complete check information)

C.4.1.6.4. Claim List. A list of claims, which have been made, shall be furnished as indicated under C.4.1.9., Library Management Reports, Claims Lists .

C.4.1.7. Cancellations and Refunds. All cancellations shall be accomplished within five business days upon appropriate notification from the Customer. If no funds will be recovered under a cancellation, the Vendor will notify the Customer. However, if funds are recovered they must be promptly credited to the Customer and no administrative fee shall be charged.

C.4.1.7.1. For Lost Periodicals, Replacements, and Discontinuance of Publication. In the case where replacement is unavailable and refunds are offered instead, the Vendor shall make a refund in full of all amounts refunded by the publishers.

C.4.1.7.2. Due to Cancellation. In those instances in which a refund has been requested due to timely cancellation of a subscription, the Vendor shall provide written evidence of his attempts to secure the refund for the government.

C.4.1.8. Addresses.

C.4.1.8.1. Bill to and Ship to Addresses. The Vendor shall support multiple shipping addresses, domestic and foreign, under one billing address. Consignee addresses shall have the capacity for up to five (5) lines for each type of address, with each line up to 30 characters.

C.4.1.8.2. Change of Address. The Vendor shall notify the publisher when Consignee changes of address occur.

C.4.1.9. Library Management Reports. At a minimum, the Vendor shall provide the following reports at no charge.

C.4.1.9.1. General Specifications. At no additional charge and on demand, the Vendor shall provide listings containing all or part of the following information as specified by the Customer:

- (a) Title
- (b) Ship-to address
- (c) Invoice-item number
- (d) FEDLINK ID and (IAG number, Delivery Order number, MIPR, or Purchase Order number)
- (e) Subscription period
- (f) Quantity
- (g) Frequency
- (h) Price with adjustments and estimates
- (I) Volume
- (j) ISSN
- (k) Local information lines: These reports shall be able to capture the stored local information category, (i.e., internal fund accounting, subject identification, agency assigned number, etc.) in fields which equal a minimum of 100 characters on the report. At least one field shall be provided for local financial data which can also appear on invoices; at least one which can be associated with each ship to address; one or more fields with a total of at least 80 characters which can be associated with each title.

In addition, the Vendor will have the capability of sorting, subtotaling, and re-totaling the reports by any of the above included fields of information, and shall allow for the application of a service charge determined by the requested sort criteria.

The Vendor shall provide reports in electronic format, at a minimum, in ASCII comma delimited format, with optional print delivery of reports. The customer agency retains the right to choose which format to receive. The Vendor may offer other electronic formats, including but not limited to files containing report data, or access to data and programs for producing reports from Vendor systems.

- C.4.1.9.2. Financial Summary Report.** The Vendor shall provide a listing on demand by government fiscal year of all Vendor instigated credit or debit invoices to the agencies for services provided. This report shall include invoice number, dollar amount, and service charge amount.
- C.4.1.9.3. Claims Lists.** The Vendor shall provide to the agency an annual, quarterly, or monthly listing of all outstanding claims and any responses received from the publishers unless the Customer waives this service. The report shall include publisher's claims time limits. If an additional claim is required for an item appearing on the report, the report itself may be used as a reclamation document by the Customer.
- C.4.1.9.4. Information Bulletins.** The Vendor shall provide, at no cost and at least monthly, information bulletins updating the latest known information on various serial titles, including serial title price increase of 25% or more, title changes, changes in frequency, or changes in availability (ceased, suspended, etc.) . The preferred method of notification is via electronic communication (email, etc.)
- C.4.1.9.5. Subscription Status Information.** Monthly, or upon demand, the Vendor shall notify the Customer in writing of any irregularity or change in status, such as: bill later, non cancelable, slow, irregular, discontinued, order direct, split title, not due for renewal at this time, period restricted, establishing contact with publisher, temporarily suspended publication, foreign title, estimated price, and price increased since last billing published price, etc.
- C.4.1.9.6. Ship-to List.** The Vendor shall provide, on demand, a listing of all Customer consignees and their complete addresses.

C.4.1.9.7. Title List Provided for RFQ. The Title List which will be used by the library as the starting point for their list for a new RFQ, shall be separated by each "ship to" address, shall alphabetically list all current subscription titles ordered or on record to be ordered for that consignee. The report shall be available in electronic format, at a minimum as an ASCII comma delimited file, with the print option available by request only RFQ lists shall contain the following minimum information:

- (1) Complete "Bill to" and "Ship to" address
- (2) Title
- (3) ISSN (stored as nnnn-nnnn)
- (4) Publisher
- (5) Quantity
- (6) Subscription Period based on Agency Data
- (7) For current online journals, the tier/level of the current subscription, if available.
- (8) Frequency
- (9) Format
- (10) All additional titles which may not be due for renewal, but which are on record for a specific consignee

C.4.1.9.8. Annual Renewal List . The renewal list will be used by the library to estimate a budget for the fiscal year, shall be separated by each "ship to" address, shall alphabetically list all subscription titles ordered or on record for that consignee, unless the agency requests other sorts or formats. Renewal lists shall contain the following minimum information:

- (1) Complete "Bill to" and "Ship to" address
- (2) Account number chargeable (including FEDLINK ID)
- (3) Title
- (4) ISSN
- (5) Quantity
- (6) Subscription Period based on Agency Data
- (7) Price: To contain latest known publishers' rates currently available
- (8) Service charge / discount
- (9) Frequency
- (10) Publication status
- (11) Renewal documentation; to contain an 80 character capacity local information field or fields for the storing of unique data for each title (e.g. internal fund accounting, subject identification, agency assigned numbers, etc.)
- (12) Estimated supplemental charges for bill laterers
- (13) Include an inflation factor either as a general statement of inflation or on individual titles on the quotation.

C.4.1.9.9. Courtesy Invoice Data. The Vendor shall supply the customer agency with, at a minimum, one additional copy of invoices or electronic invoice data to a point of contact in addition to the copy sent to the financial center for payment, e.g. to the customer library in addition to the FEDLINK or Customer's Fiscal Office.

C.4.1.9.10. Additional Reports. Additional Reports and Electronic data shall be made available under Lot 2, Optional Services. Examples of such reports/data include but are not limited to electronic files of catalog data in MARC format, local or consortia holdings data, data related to usage of electronic services.

C.4.1.10. Licenses. All License agreements will be between the Customers and the Vendors or Publishers. However, the Federal Government requires certain terms and conditions in their license agreements that may conflict with some standard commercial practices. Section H contains sample language that complies with federal requirements, a sample license, and further explanation of suggested best practices.

C.4.2. LOT 2 - OPTIONAL SERVICES Customers may require and Vendors may offer the following:

C.4.2.1. Pricing Alternatives: Fixed Price Invoicing. The Vendor shall offer a fixed price for any given subscription or list of subscriptions and shall invoice at that price regardless of publisher action.

C.4.2.2. Pricing Alternatives : Publisher's Price Plus Flat Fee Per Title. The Vendor shall offer a flat fee per title added to the Vendor's cost for the title, including discounts received by the Vendor from the publisher.

C.4.2.3. Average Price Index Report. The Vendor shall provide an average price index report to each customer covering a three-year period for all subscriptions. On demand, this report shall be arranged for each consignee by ship-to address and alphabetically by title or by subject identification. All price data shall be accessed directly from each ship-to file.

C.4.2.4. Journal Check-In. Each ship-to address has the option to have subscriptions sent to the Vendor for check-in, physical inspection, or other services, and then reshipped to the consignee. Vendor shall provide a description of check-in services offered and make the description available on demand to potential customer agencies under this BOA. Customers shall specify check-in requirements for individual ship-to addresses, in addition to the recording of receipt, such as number of ship-to addresses; physical inspection; reshipment; claiming; security tapes; bar coding; property stamps; packing slips; route slips; special packaging, labeling or other processing requirements; check-in reports or data; preference regarding local check-in system.

C.4.2.5. Missing Issues. The Vendor will provide missing issues from a storehouse of collected issues, or access to information about available issues to replace those that the customer is missing. Individual customer requirements shall specify if fulfillment of a large number of missing issues is anticipated.

- C.4.2.6. MARC Serials Record Data or other Metadata.** The Vendor shall provide electronic files of metadata including bibliographic data in MARC or other standard formats, and local or consortia holdings data, for loading into Customer's local system. The Vendor shall provide stable and accurate Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) included in title list format, in the 856 field of the MARC record, or in the appropriate element in other standard metadata formats, according to the Customer's requirements.
- C.4.2.7. ILS System Interface** The vendor shall provide integration of electronic data (EDI, vendor proprietary data, etc.) into local databases/software systems. The Vendor shall describe data available and methods for exchanging data electronically system to system, files ready for use by proprietary software/systems, and past experience in developing interfaces and data exchange with libraries and publishers..
- C.4.2.8. Additional Reports.** The Vendor shall describe additional available reports, if any, that have not already been included in Lot 1. Include data available in electronic format, in addition to MARC records, and the formats in which the data is available.

C.4.3. LOT 3 - SPECIALIZED ELECTRONIC ACCESS SERVICES.

Vendors who offer subscription services under Lot 1 may also offer Web-based access to electronic journals and articles, other software and interfaces to manage access, and collection development or control of electronic text. (Online and CD electronic journal subscriptions are covered under Lot 1 as are subscriptions to serials in print, microform and other media.) The Vendor shall provide customer specific solutions to ordering, access, and maintenance of e-journals. The Vendor may provide for access to an archive or back issues of the electronic journals, by maintaining the files centrally or allowing the subscriber the option to retain an archival copy locally. License terms for use, redistribution, etc. of e-journals materials shall be developed for FEDLINK customers as described in Section H.7. Any assistance offered by a subscription agent regarding licensing would be offered under Lot 3. Pricing formulas should be predefined where possible. Fair and reasonable customer specific offerings may be negotiated on an individual basis by LC/FEDLINK, either for individual customer or for consortia. Lot 3 covers electronic and Web-based interactive tools for electronic publications access and management. FEDLINK contracts for Electronic Information Retrieval Services cover offerings by companies providing access to electronic data that do not offer general subscription services to a wide range of serial publications in print and other media. Services offered under Lot 3 may include but are not limited to:

- C.4.3.1. User Interface to Electronic Publications** - ability to order, renew, claim, and invoice via the Web, access to electronic titles including pricing, frequency, publisher information, publisher claiming restrictions, title-specific news, access to order history and claims status, and the ability to search for missing issues and get replacements online.

- C.4.3.2. Management of Electronic Publication Subscriptions** - products and services to help the management of electronic publication subscriptions, licenses, links, customized access or file groupings for individual or consortium customers, collection assessment and collection development reports. For example, Open URL Link Resolvers, Online Lists of Resources, Federated Searching, ERM (Electronic Resource Management systems, etc.)
- C.4.3.3. Support for Licenses** - additional support for Member to negotiate and review Publisher license agreements.
- C.4.3.4. User Authorizations and/or Usage Data** - ability to provide management of Member user authorization information. Also, the ability to gather and/or combine usage statistics, either through a Vendor product or by interfacing with the Publisher to collect usage statistics.
- C.4.3.5. Customized Access or File Groupings for Individual or Consortium Customers** - additional support for access for Members with consortium arrangements.
- C.4.3.6. End User Desktop Procurement** - ability to allow end-users to search the database of available serial titles and suggest orders. The orders will be subject to review by Member staff.

C.5. PERFORMANCE PERIOD This Solicitation is for a Basic Ordering Agreement (BOA) containing a base year and option years. All orders under the resulting Agreement will contain options for the same period of time as the Basic Ordering Agreements. If the Library exercises option years for the overall FEDLINK Agreement, transfer pay Customers may exercise option years with their previously selected Vendors. Direct Pay agencies are invited to exercise option years for their orders, but must abide by their local procurement policy in so doing.

C.6. Summary of Contracting Process

C.6.1. Process for award of a Basic Ordering Agreement (BOA)

- a. FEDLINK issues a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the award of single or multiple Agreements for subscription and related services.
- b. Vendors respond to the RFP with proposals in accordance with the Statement of Work and the Solicitation provisions (see Section L).
- c. FEDLINK performs Cost and Technical Evaluations and Financial Responsibility Determination. Competitive range will be determined and award(s) may be made with or without negotiations.
- d. FEDLINK awards a Basic Ordering Agreement (BOA) to qualifying Vendors in accordance with Section M Criteria.